

# Spotlight on Prevention

Partnering to Protect People with Special Needs

## PROTECTING PEOPLE RECEIVING SERVICES FROM THE DANGERS OF CAREGIVER FATIGUE

A Fact Sheet for: **Staff**

### The Risks

Caregiver fatigue may result in an incident that jeopardizes the safety and well-being of people receiving services. This could include:

- A person's personal care and health needs not being met;
- Failure to prevent or de-escalate high risk behaviors such as choking or elopement;
- Inability to respond to a person's acute medical needs; and/or
- Failure to respond to an emergency, such as a fire.

### What You Can Do

- **Report to work fit for duty.** Communicate with your supervisor and utilize appropriate strategies (including approved time-off) anytime you are unfit for duty, or you are concerned about your ability to fulfill work-related expectations, especially due to exhaustion, illness or medication.
- **Identify and plan for addressing your individual risks of accidental sleeping on the job.** Whenever possible, complete and comply with a formal set of personalized strategies with your supervisor, such as a *Personal Action Plan* to prevent accidental sleeping on the job.
- **Don't commit willful acts of sleeping on the job and don't be complicit in a co-worker's unauthorized sleeping on the job.** Be aware that sleeping on the job is routinely addressed as misconduct and may also constitute neglect. Have a strategy in place and be prepared to address any co-worker's unauthorized sleeping on the job. It is your responsibility to address and report unsafe conditions.
- **Contact EAP programs for assistance when experiencing compassion fatigue, burn out, or frustration.** Ask for help when you are stressed, frustrated, irritable or overwhelmed.
- **Practice Self-Care.** Get a good night's sleep before reporting to work. Use your days off to rest, recover and recuperate.
- **Report Abuse or Neglect to the Justice Center's 24/7 Statewide Toll-Free Hotline.** Call: 1-855-373-2122/ TTY: 1-855-373-2123.

#### Questions?

#### Justice Center Information and Referral

Toll-Free:  
1-800-624-4143

TTY: Dial 7-1-1 for the  
NYS Relay and give the  
operator 1-800-624-  
4143

Email:  
[infoassistance@justicecenter.  
ny.gov](mailto:infoassistance@justicecenter.ny.gov)